La Madre D'Oro.

BY ALFRED R. CALHOUN.

IT WAS my fortune some years ago to be connected with a surveying party through western New Mexico and whose line of examination lay into Arizona, along the thirty-fifth parallel, where a railroad is now built.

A wilder country than that was at that time would be difficult to imagine. Far apart there were a few wretched United States posts called by courtesy "forts," but the Navajoes and the Apaches—the latter under the famed Chief Cochise—made it unpleasant traveling through the lofty mountains and across the sterile mesas that distinguish that land.

Every man in our party walked with his rifle at his back and his pistols in his belt, and when we lay down on our blankets at night our weapons were within easy reach and our pickets were as carefully posted as if we were in the presence of an enemy, as indeed we might be said to be at all times, for, though we did not often catch sight of the wily savages, we had every reason to believe that they never lost sight of us.

La Sierra Madre, or the mother mountain, as the early Spanish explorers very properly called the great continental divide, or watershed, is crossed by several trails near the latitude mentioned, the most noted being Campbell's pass, 50 miles to the west of Fort Wingate.

I had ridden ahead in this pass with two troopers to make some topographical examinations and was about five miles in the advance of the main party when an exclamation from one of the soldiers caused me to rein in my horse and to ask the cause of the alarm.

"I saw an Injun, sir, up there in the woods," said the soldier, indicating the direction with his carbine.

In an instant we were dismounted and watching, with our bridles over our arms and our carbines ready.

After waiting some minutes I began to think the man was mistaken, and was about to give the order to remount, when a horse plunged down the steep mountain side, and a glance told me that the remarkable-looking person on the creature's back was neither Apache nor Navajoe, but a white man like ourselves.

This rider's long hair and beard looked to be as white as the snow on the distant mountain peaks, and his costume was a fantastic though decidedly picturesque cross between the dress of a Mexican and that of a northwest hunter.

The pommel of his saddle, the buttons on his leggings, the stock of his long rifle and the hilts of his pistols and knife fairly flashed with silver. He was well mounted and rode in a way that showed that the years that had frosted his hair had not lessened his wonderful skill as a horseman.

He came fearlessly toward us and shook hands, saying as he did so, with the manner of an educated man: "My name is Levi Bronson; did you ever hear of me before?"

I told Mr. Bronson I never had heard of him before, but to save his pride, for the confession seemed to give him pain, I added: "I am a civil engineer and have not been long in this region."

"A civil engineer?" he repeated. "What do you want in these mountains?" and he waved his hands about him, and looked as if he thought me an intruder. I told him that if he rode back toward our party with me I would explain our object; at the same time I expressed my surprise that any man should venture into such a dangerous territory alone.

"I know the Indians, and the Indians know me," said this remarkable man. "I am to them the Silver Chief, a great medicine man, who lived with them and nursed them back to health when they sickened before the men of my race came to slay and starve them. Ah, I sometimes blush for the white blood in my veins!"

There was a strange gleam in his eyes as he spoke, and I concluded that the stranger was not well balanced. I told him the object of our survey, which had the Pacific ocean for its objective point and a railroad for its conclusion, but the information did not please him.

"It is folly to build a railroad through a wilderness," he said. "What is there to support a railroad here?" and again he waved his long arms at the forest-covered hills.

I told him that railroads had become the pioneers of civilization, and that along their tracks farms and villages and cities sprang up.

"That may be in other places," he said, "but it is impossible that a railroad should exist so close to Madre d'Oro."

"Madre d'Oro?" I repeated.

"Yes; Madre d'Oro means the mother of gold. Did you never hear of it?"

I confessed that I never had, and expressed a desire to be enlightened.

The old man eyed me for a few seconds in silence, as if judging whether I was worthy or not; then he shook his head, and said:

"It is my secret, and I do not know you well enough to confide it."

I bowed and we rode back to where the engineer corps had formed a camp.

Levi Bronson remained with us nearly a week, and during that time he refused very tempting offers to act as guide for us as far as the Colorado river.

He proved himself to be a famous hunter, and he ventured off alone with a perfect contempt for what would have been positive danger to any other man.

He was voted "crazy" by all the party, but in me the man excited the liveliest interest, and by many confidences I tried to draw from him the story of his life, which I felt sure was made up of incidents of no ordinary kind.

The night before he left he drew me to one side, and, sitting down with his back to a tree and the flames of a neighboring fire lighting up his picturesque face, he said: "And so you'd like to know something about Madre d'Oro?"

I told him that I should, if he thought me worthy of his confidence.

"It is a secret," he said, in a half whisper, "but then what does it matter if the world knew, so long as only one man can find the place?"

"What place?"

"The place where all the gold in these rocks and streams comes from—La Madre d'Oro—the Mother of Gold. Ah, thousands have died trying to find the place, and it may be that now that I know where it is I may not be permitted to enter it, for you know the Aztecs believe that the wonderful valley is enchanted."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, and I am inclined to that belief myself, but then I have spent so many long, dreary years searching that it would not do to lose heart now that untold wealth is within my reach."

I agreed with him, and by careful questioning I drew out of him his story of the valley of gold, which I subsequently found to be an established belief among the miners of the northern Mexican states, and to them it came, without doubt, from the Aztecs, who were once the masters of all this land.

Using my own language, this was the account in which he firmly believed:

Within a hundred miles of the place where we were then encamped was the wonderful valley of gold, and Levi Bronson was confident that he knew the exact location.

The valley was in the heart of the Sierra Madre mountains, walled in by towering rocks, and accessible only by a secret passage through which flowed a stream that, excepting on one day in every year, filled up the passage and made ingress impossible.

This valley is small in extent and perfectly circular. Through it the river flows cool and clear, and filled with fish whose scales are golden. The banks are masses of variegated flowers, and trees ever in blossom made delightful shades and fairy-like arbors. Birds of the sweetest song and most exquisite plumage, of varieties unknown to the outer world, make vocal this wonderful valley and flash through its dark green foliage like animated blossoms.

Running across this wonderful valley there is a belt 40 feet in width on which no vegetation grows, for the belt is the top of a wall of gold that flashes with indescribable brilliancy when the sun balances in midheaven and looks lovingly down on Madre d'Oro.

The old Aztec priests know well this valley, and so they still cherish the belief that Montezuma will again appear in the flesh, to lead them against the Spanish conquerors, whom they have never ceased to hate. They think the wealth necessary to regain their liberties will come from this valley.

But one white man ever saw it, and that was a Spaniard named Jose Alvarrez, who entered through the subterranean passage, and, being discovered by the guardian priests, was sacrificed to the sun on the golden ledge.

"And you know where this wonderful valley is?" I asked Levi Bronson, when he had finished his description.

"Yes," he replied; "I am sure I could lead you within one mile of the place."

"Are you going there?"

"I am."

"And you are not afraid of the guardian priests?"

"No, for I am a doctor, and I have practiced my profession for years among

"IT IS A SECRET," HE SAID.

the Indians to make them my friends. They would not harm me."

"But, granting that you can find the gold," I asked, "of what use will such a fabulous amount be?"

"I will only take what I want," he replied.

"And how much will that be?"

"I do not know. I have earned a great deal in all these years of working and waiting. I want to make my old age serene and happy."

Levi Bronson wanted me to join him, but I declined, and we each went our separate way, and I did not hear of him again. But it is safe to say he never reached La Madre d'Oro.

I have often thought of the old man since, and those to whom I have told the story laughed and said: "He was surely insane."

Perhaps he was, but is he any more insane than the myriads who from youth to old age give every thought to the acquisition of wealth, and who seek valleys of gold as inaccessible and fabulous as Levi Bronson's Madre d'Oro?—N. Y. Ledger.

Tunnels.

There are several tunnels under the Thames, one under the Hudson at New York is more than half completed and one to be built under the Danube at Buda-Pesth will be ventilated by electric machinery. The projected tunnel under the Irish channel to connect Great Britain with the north of Ireland will probably be put through within the next decade.

AGRICULTURAL HINTS

THE CAMPHOR TREE.

It Can Be Planted Successfully in Some Southern States.

Camphor trees may be grown either from seed or from cuttings. They are usually grown from seed, as the trees fruit abundantly, and seedlings can be grown more easily than cuttings. The seeds are collected at maturity in October and November, and after drying are packed in sharp white sand or some similar material to keep them fresh until the time of planting in spring. About the last of March they are sown in drills in the seed bed.

The soil of the seed bed should be a good sandy loam mixed with about one-third leaf mold. The seed bed should be kept moist, but not too wet, and should be shaded from the direct rays of the sun if the weather is warm. The best soil temperature for germinating camphor seeds is from 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature of the atmosphere may be ten degrees higher. The seedlings will

CAMPHOR TREE.

A, young leafy shoot, scale one-third; B, flower cluster, life size; C, fruit, life size.

grow well at higher temperature, but are likely to lack vigor and hardiness.

The seedlings may be grown in pots, which will facilitate transplanting at any time, or they may be transplanted in nursery rows early in April when one year old. Plants two years old are generally regarded as best for final planting. At this age they vary from 20 to 40 inches in height.

When set out for ornamental purposes, the camphor tree may be expected to grow, in favorable situations, about as rapidly as a Le Conte pear, and to require about as much room. In Japan, where the law requires that a new tree shall be set out for every one cut, they are not generally set in straight orchard rows, but cultivation there is performed almost exclusively by hand labor. There are no records showing results of regular orchard planting, hence the distances at which trees should be planted must be determined by the size and form of the trees and the method of cultivation and of procuring the gum. They may be set closely in rows about ten feet apart, and alternate rows cut and reset every five years, thus producing bush-like plants of ten years' growth. They may be planted in checks ten feet square, and alternate trees cut every ten or twelve years, or they may be planted in larger checks, and all of the trees be cut at the age of 15 or 20 years.

There are not sufficient data obtainable upon which to base definite statements as to the best methods of planting or the age at which the trees may be cut with greatest profit for the production of gum. A recent English consular report from Japan states that "although hitherto the youngest wood from which camphor was extracted was about 70 to 80 years old, it is expected that under the present scientific management the trees will give equally good results after 25 or 30 years." Camphor of good quality has been produced in Florida from the leaves and twigs of trees less than 20 years old, one pound of crude gum being obtained from 77 pounds of leaves and twigs.

The trees will endure severe pruning with little apparent injury. One-third of the leaves and young shoots may be removed at one time without materially checking the growth of the tree. The largest proportion of camphor is contained in the older, larger roots; the trunk, limbs, twigs and leaves containing successively a decreasing proportion. When the camphor tree is killed nearly to the ground by frost it sends up vigorous shoots from the base. It may be expected to do the same when cut, especially if cut late in the fall. Experiments are needed to determine whether this growth may be depended upon, or whether it will be more profitable to dig out the larger roots and set out new seedlings.—Lyster H. Dewey, Assistant in Division of Botany, Department of Agriculture.

FACTS FOR FARMERS.

Rape is said to make good hog pasture.

Bean or pea straw can be profitably baled.

Deep culture of potatoes after they are in bloom is bad business.

Diversify your farming. Never carry your eggs in one basket or two.

The corn fodder shredder is a good thing and so is the shredded corn fodder.

Time spent in preparing the ground for wheat will pay much better than you may think.

The acreage of wheat will be largely increased. That is the way to do things. When a market is good we smother it.

A young man announces in a contemporary that he wants a good strong Christian wife to take care of the chickens and garden. There is a chance of a lifetime for some girl who has strength in her arms and grace in her heart.—Western Plowman.

HIVES MADE AT HOME.

Those with the Least Fixtures Are the Most Satisfactory.

The kind and size of hive is a most bewildering question for beginners. The hive to meet the demands of bee-keepers in general is the one with the least fixtures. The Quimby frame, or one of about that size, has won the favor of the apiarist in this locality. The hive we prefer is made of seven-eighth inch pine planed on both sides, 20 inch square outside measure, and 12 inches in depth, with hand holes in the sides. The upper and lower stories are alike. The front board is ⅜ inch narrower, thus leaving an entrance ⅜ by 20 inches. A slat ⅜ by ⅞ by 20 inches is used to control the size of the entrance. The bottom board has a cleat 1 by 1 inch on each end, to prevent curling around on the under side. If two boards are used they should be matched.

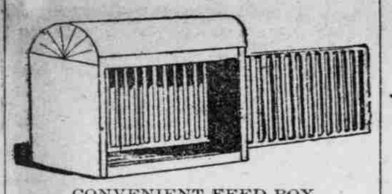
The rabbet on which the frames hang is furnished with improved tin. The alighting board has a cleat ⅞ by ⅞ inch on each end and is 6 by 20 inches. A piece of inch hoop iron 5 inches long is bent almost on a square; one is nailed at each end of the alighting board on the top side by one end; the other end has a three-cornered hole to be hung on two screws, one at each end, at the proper height to bring the top of the alighting board even with the lower side of the entrance. The bottom board as well as the upper and lower stories are held in place by the Van Deuser hive clamp; they may be used without. The furniture for this hive consists of a division board 11¾ by 18⅛ inches, with top bar ½ by ½ by 19 inches scant measure. It is made of ½ inch lumber with a cleat ½ by ⅞ inch on each end to prevent curling. The frames are 17¼ by 11½ inches outside measure.

The top bar is made so as to form a comb guide and is 19 inches scant. The bottom bars are ⅜ by 1 by 16½ inches; the ends 11½ by 1¼ inches. The hive contains the division board and from 9 to 12 frames according to the requirements of the swarm it contains. I prefer an upper entrance to a shade board; it saves the bees going upstairs "on foot" and the result is more honey. When the flow of honey is large, as in the clover and basswood season, the upper entrance should be full size; when the second story is first set on and the flow light, the entrance should be small. When the robbers get in line of battle and when the nights become cold toward fall, the entrance should be nearly closed.—Rural World.

POULTRY FEED BOX.

It Keeps the Fowls from Trampling Upon Their Rations.

Despite all that has ever been said to the contrary, the idea still prevails in some sections that poultry can get along and even thrive if their food is presented to them in the simplest manner. This is a mistake. Where soft food is given, it is generally trampled upon by all the birds before it is fully eaten, and, in consequence, they are compelled



CONVENIENT FEED BOX.

to devour a more or less amount of dirt, which is usually of such a nature as to be no good to them. In order to avoid this, I would suggest that a feedbox be made, having a door of slats made of laths, as shown herewith; also, on the side opposite from the door, I should have slats, as seen from the inside of the box. Place the food in this, shut the door, and the fowls can reach the food from each side readily between the slats, but cannot soil it. Furthermore, a dish of water can be set within it, and the fowls can reach through and drink, but they cannot pollute it as they otherwise would. By this device, stray cats and dogs have no chance of getting at the food, should it happen to be of a nature palatable to them, and stealing it away from the fowls. The semi-rotundity of the roof is to keep the fowls from roosting on it.—Frederick O. Sibley, in N. Y. Tribune.

When to Plant Trees.

"Early fall is an excellent time for planting trees," writes Thomas Meehan in the Ladies' Home Journal. "By early is meant as soon as the wood is ripe and the winter buds fully formed. This is usually a month before the regular fall of the leaf. The leaves are stripped by hand. After the wood is ripe it makes no difference whether the leaves are taken off by Jack Frost, the wind or the human hand. In the eastern part of Pennsylvania this would be usually about the 1st of September, and the work of planting can be kept up during October, and often to November or December. But late fall planting in cold climates is as risky as late spring planting. The moisture is dried out by cold winds or hot suns before the great evaporation. In milder climates planting may be a success all winter."

Mechanical Effect of Drainage.

The mechanical effects of drainage are to deepen the soil and promote its more thorough pulverization. Its first effect is to dry its surface soil by drawing out of it all the surplus moisture, so that in early spring or late autumn it may be worked with the plow as advantageously as at midsummer. A wet soil can never be properly pulverized, and the plowing or working a clay soil, or even a heavy loam, when wet, tends only to puddle it and render it less pervious to water and air. Rain water contains a great quantity and variety of fertilizing substances, and it deposits them in the soil during its passage through it. Both these facts are perceptible to the senses without resorting to chemical tests.—Farmers' Review.

Good clean seed wheat is as important as clean seed of any kind.

One bad thing about the Klondike gold country is that it affords an excuse for so many crank inventors to annoy people by telling of the fool machines they are going to build to get them there.—Chicago Record.

There is probably nothing in this world as variable as the stories of a quarrel told by each side.—Washington Democrat.

THE MARKETS.

CINCINNATI, Sept. 27.			
LIVE STOCK—Cattle, common	$ 2 25	@	2 75
Select butchers	4 00	@	4 40
CALVES—Fair to good light	6 00	@	7 25
HOGS—Common	3 35	@	4 10
Mixed packers	4 10	@	4 20
Light shippers	4 25	@	4 40
SHEEP—Choice	3 25	@	3 65
LAMBS—Good to choice	5 00	@	5 40
FLOUR—Winter family	3 60	@	3 90
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2 red		@	93½
No. 3 red		@	91
Corn—No. 2 mixed		@	31
Oats—No. 2	21	@	21½
Rye—No. 2		@	47
HAY—Prime to choice	8 75	@	9 00
PROVISIONS—Mess pork		@	9 12½
Lard—Prime steam		@	4 30
BUTTER—Choice dairy	11	@	12
Prime to choice creamery		@	22
APPLES—Per bbl	2 50	@	2 75
POTATOES—Per bbl	2 10	@	2 25
NEW YORK.			
FLOUR—Winter patent	5 25	@	5 45
No. 2 red		@	97¾
CORN—No. 2 mixed		@	34¾
RYE		@	41½
OATS—Mixed		@	24½
PORK—New Mess	9 00	@	9 25
LARD—Western		@	4 80
CHICAGO.			
FLOUR—Winter patents	5 00	@	5 10
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2 red	94	@	95
No. 2 Chicago spring		@	91¼
CORN—No. 2	28	@	28½
OATS—No. 2		@	19½
PORK—Mess	8 10	@	8 15
LARD—Steam		@	4 35
BALTIMORE.			
FLOUR—Family	4 75	@	5 10
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2	95¼	@	95½
Southern—Wheat	90	@	96
Corn—Mixed	33¼	@	33½
Oats—No. 2 white	25	@	25½
Rye—No. 2 western	52½	@	55
CATTLE—First quality	4 10	@	4 35
HOGS—Western	4 90	@	5 00
INDIANAPOLIS			
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2		@	95
Corn—No. 2 mixed		@	26½
Oats—No. 2 mixed		@	20
LOUISVILLE.			
FLOUR—Winter patent	3 75	@	4 00
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2 red		@	93
Corn—Mixed		@	31½
Oats—Mixed		@	21½
PORK—Mess		@	9 50
LARD—Steam		@	4 75